

# I ♥ Fair Trade



Newsletter of Fair Trade for a Greater Orlando Coalition (FTGOC)

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## Introduction

Welcome to the first issue of *I ♥ Fair Trade*, the newsletter of Fair Trade for a Greater Orlando Coalition. As the title suggests, this newsletter is about FTGOC, its goals and activities, as well as the ultimate aim of the Fair Trade movement: achieving a decent standard of living for working people throughout the world. In these few pages you will find information about upcoming and past events, social and political developments relevant to Fair Trade, and features on businesses, organizations and individuals who are furthering the goals of the movement. We hope you find this information helpful and that you are inspired to make a difference, Fair Trade-style.

## FTGOC Progress Report

American cultural anthropologist Margaret Meade famously directed us to “never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” With this understanding we realize that while individual actions are important, when like minded people combine their abilities and capacities in a

movement they are able to amplify what they can accomplish as separate individuals. While there have been many *individuals* and *groups* buying Fair Trade products in the Greater Orlando area, until May 2006 there had not been a Fair Trade *movement* in the region. Support for Fair Trade in our community is growing at a rapid pace, and it is time to reach even further in creating awareness and demand for this ethical and attainable way of doing business with producers in other countries. Furthermore, our public institutions, such as city governments and college campuses, have yet to internalize Fair Trade as a value in their purchasing policies. When governments fail to implement policies that reflect the values of the public, these governments cease functioning democratically and lose their *raison d'être*.



Making Fair Trade universally understood and widely available as well as establishing Fair Trade purchasing policies for municipalities and campuses in the Greater Orlando area is why Fair Trade for a Greater Orlando Coalition (FTGOC) was created a

year and a half ago. We seek to strengthen the individual efforts of Fair Trade supporters by building a broad based movement that will empower the participants and engage the public to understand and support Fair Trade as individuals and as collective owners of the cities and campuses in the Greater Orlando area. To this effect FTGOC has participated in and sponsored many community events such as the first and second annual World Fair Trade Day Celebration in Orlando observed on the second Saturday of May. FTGOC has also built a coalition of over a dozen local organizations supporting our cause while working to create dialogue with elected officials. In only a year and a half FTGOC has come a long way in educating and engaging the public, but we have a lot more work to do! To reach our goals, we need more wonderful people devoting their time, vision, and creativity to the Fair Trade movement. Ask how you can get involved with FTGOC today. — Scott Tess.

## Fair Trade and the U.S.-Peru FTA

In early November, Congress voted in favor of the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement, preparing the way for a vote in the Senate by year's end. Similar to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and its Central American counterpart (CAFTA), the Peru FTA seeks to eliminate

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tariffs and other barriers to goods and services, promote economic growth, and expand trade between Peru and the United States. While this agreement will greatly benefit large agribusiness interests in both countries, it will have possibly devastating consequences for small Peruvian farmers. By removing tariffs on commodities entering Peru, the Peru FTA will force small farmers in that country to compete with heavily subsidized imports from the U.S., in turn pushing down prices and forcing small farmers out of business. In fact, this has already happened in Mexico because of NAFTA. Small farmers in the U.S. will not stand to benefit much from the Peru FTA either, having already been marginalized by large agribusiness corporations domestically. As with previous Free Trade Agreements, this newest one is premised on the assumption of symmetric market knowledge and access and it will benefit only those with enough money to survive the sudden changes in commodity prices. Small Peruvian farmers do not possess these resources. Yet they



rely on access to this market to provide a livelihood for their families. In spite of unique provisions requiring the adoption and enforcement of the terms of the ILO (International Labor Organization) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Peru FTA in its

current form provides scant assurance that these terms will be upheld, or even enforced. As an organization that works toward the implementation of Fair Trade policies, FTGOC joins the broad coalition of Fair Trade and labor groups in the United States and Peru in opposition to the Peru Free Trade Agreement. With a vote on the agreement coming up in the Senate later this year, the time left for action is limited. We urge you to contact your Senator and tell them why the Peru FTA is a bad idea. To find out who your Senator is, visit [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org) and enter your zip code under "My Elected Officials".  
— Brian Salmons.

### That's Fair!

One church in Tacoma, Washington has opened a new mission outpost for the gospel of fair trade. Speaking of the Fair Trade movement, Susan Dobkins (of the Micah Project, a peace and justice outreach program of the Tacoma United Methodist Church), says "it's a model of global trade which takes into account that profit can't be our only motivation". To see how a little effort makes a big difference in people's lives, watch this short video at the UMC website... ([archives.umc.org/interior.asp?ptid=1&mid=10674](http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?ptid=1&mid=10674)) ...and read this story... ([dwb.thenewstribune.com/business/story/5377582p-4863276c.html](http://dwb.thenewstribune.com/business/story/5377582p-4863276c.html)).

### About FTGOC

Our main goal is to work with the City of Orlando to pass a Fair Trade Resolution. This would mean that whenever the City Departments buy coffee, for example, they would choose the Fair Trade alternative. In

support of this goal, FTGOC also seeks to:

- 1) Educate the community about the Fair Trade alternative,
- 2) Expand the market for Fair Trade products, and
- 3) Build a strong coalition of community groups supporting Fair Trade.

### Get Involved...

Start small! Next time you need to make a purchase, whether it be coffee, clothing or home furnishings, buy Fair Trade! Look for the Fair Trade Certified™ label. There are numerous vendors online and in business locally here in Greater Orlando that sell Fair Trade products. If your local grocery store does not stock fair trade products, tell them you want to buy these items. Send a letter, an email or an Action Card: [www.geocities.com/ftgoc/FTGOC\\_action\\_cards.pdf](http://www.geocities.com/ftgoc/FTGOC_action_cards.pdf).



If you would like to volunteer with FTGOC please contact us...

### Contact FTGOC

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*"No business which depends for existence on paying less than living wages to its workers has any right to continue in this country...and by living wages I mean more than a bare subsistence level --I mean the wages of decent living."*  
Franklin D. Roosevelt, June 16, 1933.